



State of Vermont  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

**2003-2004 Major Accomplishments**

**Governor's \$105 Million Jobs Package & Economic Development Initiatives**

*The State's Largest Investment in Job Creation*

- Enhanced Vermont Economic Progress Council – Tax Credits Help Create 2,000 New Jobs
- Created Angel Investor Tax Credit & Mezzanine Financing
- Recapitalized the Vermont Economic Development Authority Creating More than \$100 Million of Capital
- Established First Ever Computer Sales Tax Holiday
- Increased Economic Development Funding and Workforce Training Programs
- Increased Minimum Wage
- Significantly Enhanced Employer Recruitment and Retention Efforts
- Increased Commitment to Marketing & Tourism
- Improved Captive Insurance Industry Incentives
- Implemented Convenient Credit Card Payments for State Services
- Began Necessary Reforms of the Workers' Compensation System
- Established a Telecommunications Initiative to Improve Broadband and Wireless Coverage
- Decreased the Corporate Income Tax Rate and Leveled the Playing Field for Vermont Companies
- Introduced Favorable Unemployment Insurance Treatment for New Businesses
- Established the Vermont Seed Capital Fund to Increase Capital Investment
- Embarked on Trade Missions to Quebec and Taiwan

**Balancing Environmental Protection and Job Creation**

*The Vermont Way*

- Passed Long-awaited Renewable Energy Bill to Promote Alternatives and Offer Consumers Options
- Established the Vermont Hydro-electric Power Authority to Finance, Purchase, Own, Operate, or Manage any Interest in the Dams on the Connecticut and Deerfield Rivers
- Opposed Repeated Efforts of Federal Government to Weaken Environmental Regulations
- Developed the \$139 Million Clean & Clear Water Action Plan with an Initial \$8 Million to Build Manure Pits, Stabilize Streambanks and Reduce Stormwater Runoff
- Provided Incentives to Build a Restorative Economy and Revitalize Brownfields Where Redevelopment is Difficult Because of Pollutants
- Enacted a Long-Term Water Quality Remediation Plan to Solve Stormwater Runoff

### **Property Tax Relief and Act 60 Reform**

- Ended Years of Gridlock and Eliminated the Divisive Sharing Pool
- Eliminated the Property Tax on Farm Buildings in Current Use Program
- Reduced the Statewide Property Tax from \$1.10 to \$1.05 in FY05
- Reduced Average Statewide Rate for Education in Most Communities by Approximately 20%
- Established the Douglas Principles for Property Tax/Education Funding: *Accountability, Sustainability, Cost containment & Simplicity*

### **Strengthening Vermont's Health Care System**

- Strengthened the Certificate of Need Law to Curb Skyrocketing Health Care Costs
- Established the Chronic Care Initiative to Reform Vermont's Health Care System
- Implemented the Fit & Healthy Program to Teach Children the Value of Good Nutrition and Regular Exercise
- Protected the Nest Egg of Low and Middle-Income Seniors trying to Afford Long Term Care
- Required Transparency in Drug Pricing and Increasing Coverage for Over-the-Counter Alternatives
- Negotiated Deeper Discounts for Pharmacy Programs by Pooling with Other States
- Created a Model Policy for Nutrition and Physical Activity Guidelines for Students
- Addressed Need for Kidney Dialysis Unit in Northeast Kingdom

### **Permit Reform**

- Consolidated and Streamlined Appeals Process
- Preserved Environmental Protection Criteria
- Created a More Predictable Process
- Removed a Chief Obstacle to Job Creation
- Eliminated 30 Years of Overlapping and Duplicative Regulation
- Revised the Planning and Zoning Statutes in Chapter 117, Making the Local Permitting Process More Timely, Efficient and Predictable

### **DETER – Drug Education, Treatment, Enforcement and Rehabilitation Program**

*\$10 million Investment in Education, Enforcement, Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation*

*Vermont's Most Comprehensive Commitment to Combating Substance Abuse*

- Funded Middle School Drug Counselors—Part of Four Year Effort
- Increased Student Assistance Programs
- Provided Resources for After School Programs
- Funded Outpatient Treatment Clinicians
- Created First In-Patient Treatment Clinic in Vermont
- Improved Offender Re-entry Programs
- Increased Penalties for Drug Trafficking
- Added 26 Troopers over Two Years
- Provided New Directions Grants for Community Substance Abuse Coalitions
- Created Undercover Heroin Enforcement Action Team (HEAT Team)

### **Fiscal Conservatism**

- FY04 & FY05 Budgets are Balanced, Compassionate and Reflect Priorities Established by Governor
- FY04 & FY05 Capital Bills Maintain Commitment to Debt Limit Established by the Debt Affordability Committee

### **Renewed Vermont's Commitment to Family Farms**

- Provided Farmers with Emergency Relief and Seed Money
- Established the Farm Viability Program
- Increased Promotional Support for Agri-tourism & Specialty Food Initiatives
- Provided Those Who Put Food on the Table a Seat at the Cabinet Table
- Eliminated the Property Tax on Farm Buildings in the Current Use Program
- Clarified the Right To Farm Law to Protect Farms from Lawsuits
- Implemented Water Quality Standards with Financial and Technical Assistance for Farmer
- Adopted the Nation's First Seed Labeling Law

### **Education**

- Established a Higher Education Investment Tax Credit for Low and Middle-income Families
- Increased Funding for Higher Education by 2% or More Each Year
- Allowed College-age Students in State Custody to Draw Down Assistance from a \$25,000 Trust Fund to Help Pay Tuition Costs
- Built the Foundation for a Stronger Early Childhood Education System by Embracing the Building Bright Futures Plan
- Recognized that when Assaults become Pervasive, Persistent and Designed to Humiliate or Ridicule Children, Parents and Schools Must Respond
- Set a Model Policy for Schools to Deal with Persistent Bullying of Kids at School

### **Revitalized Transportation Infrastructure**

- Increased Funding for Paving by 56% in FY04 and Maintained that Level in FY05
- Kept Promise to Kick-start Major Infrastructure Projects including the Bennington Bypass, Missisquoi Bay Bridge and the Circ Highway
- Provided Funds to Pave Both Lanes I-89 North and South between Montpelier and Bolton

### **Protecting Children From Predators**

- Implemented the Amber Alert System to Enhance Searches for Abducted Children
- Enacted a True "Megan's Law" that Provides Community Notification through an Internet-based Sex Offender Registry

### **Government Reorganization**

#### *One of the Most Ambitious Government Reorganizations in More Than Two Decades*

- Established the Vermont Institute for Government Effectiveness--Top to Bottom Review of Government Operations to Root Out Waste and Inefficiencies that Cost Taxpayer Dollars
- Elevated Agriculture Commissioner to Cabinet Secretary
- Began Reorganization of Agency of Human Services – Improved Services to Families and Children
- Created Dept. of Innovation and Information – Dramatically Improves State IT Services
- Transferred Fire and Prevention Officers to Department of Public Safety, Creating Better Integration, Centralization and Coordination of the State's Fire Prevention, Fire Safety, and Fire Service Training Programs